



**Jefferson County
Department of Health
and Environment**
health.jeffco.us

*To create, promote & enhance
health & vitality through
innovation, collaboration
and celebration*

Administration
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Golden, CO 80401-1798
(303) 271-5700
Fax (303) 271-5702

Lakewood
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Lakewood, CO 80226
(303) 232-6301
Fax (303) 239-7088
Medical Records Confidential
Fax: 303-239-7157

Arvada
6303 Wadsworth Bypass
Arvada, CO 80003
(303) 275-7500
Fax (303) 275-7503

Conifer
Mountain Resource Center
11030 Kitty Drive
Conifer, CO 80433
(303) 838-7552
Fax (303) 838-3781

Environmental Health
1801 19th Street
Golden, CO 80401
(303) 271-5755
Fax (303) 271-5760

Edgewater WIC
1981 B Sheridan Blvd.
Edgewater, CO 80214
(303) 239-9580
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Vital Records
800 Jefferson County Parkway
Suite 1300
Golden, CO 80401
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Fax (303) 271-6451

**Public Health . . .
Everyday, Everywhere,
Everyone**

**NEWS RELEASE
For immediate release**

May 8, 2006

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2006 West Nile Virus Disease Surveillance Begins in Jefferson County

Golden – The Jefferson County Department of Health and Environment (JCDHE) announced today that disease surveillance for the 2006 West Nile Virus season has started in Jefferson County. West Nile virus is a mosquito-borne disease that is spread to humans through the bite of an infected mosquito. Mosquitoes become infected by feeding on the blood of a bird that carries the virus. The disease is not passed from person to person or from bird to person. Because WNV kills birds and is particularly lethal to crows, jays and magpies, state and local health agencies track the location and number of dead birds in order to monitor potential disease. Currently, in Jefferson County mosquito activity is very low. Historically, mosquito populations become noticeable the first week of July in Jefferson County. No cases of WNV in man or animals have been reported so far this year in Colorado.

2006 Dead Bird Surveillance:

Residents are encouraged to report dead bird sightings as part of the season's surveillance activities. Persons who find dead birds or would like to report sick or dying birds in their bird flocks in the state should call the Colorado Health Emergency Line for the Public (CoHELP) at **1-877-462-2911**. This is a new, comprehensive system established in Colorado in 2006 for reporting sick, dying or dead birds that might be carriers either of avian flu or West Nile virus. Dr. Jim Dale, DVM, Director of Environmental Health Services, explained, "As in previous years we ask residents to partner with us in disease surveillance by reporting sightings of dead birds, the difference is this year we have a new statewide call center to record information, enter into database, answer questions and ultimately improve surveillance across the state."

- The CoHELP Line staff will collect information on the species and number of dead or affected birds and will direct callers to appropriate agency for follow-up if indicated. They will also compile the information and provide electronic computer generated lists of bird deaths by type of bird and location found to local health agencies.
- If the bird is a crow, raven, magpie or jay from the corvid family, the usual carriers of West Nile virus, callers will be directed during the West Nile virus season from June through September to their local or regional public health agency, i.e. JCDHE. JCDHE will determine if the bird should be collected by the local animal control agency. Do not collect the bird yourself.
- JCDHE Environmental Health Services will track reports of dead bird east of the foothills and will test any corvids (jays, magpies, and crows) or raptors (hawks, eagles, falcons) that die in the foothills and are picked up and submitted by Jefferson County Animal Control to JCDHE Environmental Health Services Zoonosis Program at 1801 19th Street, Golden, CO. JCDHE will not accept dead birds unless they come through an animal control agency.

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West Nile Virus Surveillance Begins 2-2-2

Dead Bird Disposal

Dead birds unsuitable for testing or birds other than crows, blue jays or raptors should be disposed of using a shovel and placing the dead bird in double plastic bags. The bags can then be placed outside in trash. Dead birds can also be buried several feet underground where they will not be disturbed. Hands should be washed thoroughly with soap and water after handling dead birds.

Mosquito Control: Our integrated mosquito control contractor, Ottertail Environmental, has been reviewing, monitoring, and inspecting "mosquito breeding sites" identified in 2005 as well as investigating potential new sites in the plains. Ottertail will begin monitoring potential larval development sites east of the foothills the first week of June. Larviciding with environmentally friendly products will be done on those occasions when immature potential disease carrying mosquitoes (larvae) are found.

Fight the Bite, Prevent Human Infection:

Public health officials remind everyone that West Nile Virus can be seriously debilitating and life threatening in some cases. Most infections are mild and symptoms include fever, headache and body aches. More severe cases may include headache, high fever, neck stiffness, stupor, disorientation, coma, tremors, muscle weakness or convulsions. Persons who experience the more severe symptoms should contact their health care provider immediately. WNV can cause encephalitis (inflammation of the brain) or meningitis (inflammation of the spinal cord and lining of the brain).

Everyone should minimize their risk of contracting WNV by following these precautionary steps:

Remember the five Ds

- **Drain:** empty standing water around the house weekly since it's where mosquitoes lay eggs. Empty water out of tires, cans, flowerpots, clogged rain gutters, rain barrels, toys and puddles. Doors and windows should also be kept closed and/or properly screened to keep mosquitoes out.
- **DEET:** apply insect repellent that contains DEET, Picaridin or Oil of lemon eucalyptus. Be sure to follow label instructions before applying repellent and follow directions carefully.
- **Dress:** wear long-sleeved shirts and long pants while outdoors.
- **Dawn & Dusk:** avoid mosquitoes by staying indoors at dawn and dusk when they are most active.

For more information on West Nile Virus and protecting against mosquitoes please visit:
www.fightthebitecolorado.com.

To report dead birds please call CoHELP line at: **1-877-462-2911**

For local information on West Nile Virus and prevention and control activities contact Jefferson County Department of Health and Environment's, Environmental Health Services at 303-271-5755 or visit: <http://health.jeffco.us>